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Executive of the Month: Dib, CEO of DIB Development: A real estate developer branching out of Brooklyn

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Roland Dib developed a passion for real estate early in life. He was a young teenager when he first started working in construction alongside his uncle.

"I have always loved real estate and the value of it," said Dib, CEO of DIB Development, the growing real estate development company he founded in 1987 that focuses on property acquisition and development, construction, asset management and investment sales.

Under Dib's direction, the company has completed in excess of \$100 million in commercial and residential projects throughout the U.S.

Before going into real estate, Dib launched Air Tech Labs, an environmental remediation company that successfully completed thousands of environmental jobs that involved asbestos abatement, lead removal, underground fuel tanks, contaminated soil and PCB cleanups. "That hands-on experience gave me the strength to deal with acquiring properties that may have had some environmental issues," said Dib. "It's easier for us to understand and access such issues and to work with clean up."

NoHo's 37 Great Jones

Today, as head of new business development and acquisitions for DIB Management, Dib spearheads many of the company's largest projects. He is presently transforming a 1917 landmarked building into a new rental at 37 Great Jones St. in NoHo, (37greatjones.com), that features a three-bedroom, four-bath penthouse with 14-ft. ceilings, two outdoor entertainment spaces, in addition to three full-floor apartments and ground floor retail space.

Dib hired architect Joseph Pell Lombardi to redesign the 10,446 s/f building that is getting a sixth-floor addition. The building's individual residences are appointed with loft-like spaces, high-ceilings, appliances, individual environmental controls, custom cabinetry, private entry elevators and Virtual Doorman.

Dib expects rents to range from \$25,000 for the penthouse to between \$10,000 - \$12,000 a month for the floors below. "There is already great interest in this building because of the popularity and attraction of this neighborhood," said Dib who said the building's model and apartments are slated to open this fall with occupancy in January of 2014.

DIB Development also recently completed a seven-story, 24-unit rental building opposite Lutheran Medical Center in Bay Ridge, as well as, several industrial and office projects throughout neighborhoods like Sunset Park, Red Hook, Gowanus, East New York and South Brooklyn. DIB Development is gearing up for its next deal, a property on Fourth Ave. near the Barclays Center.

Dib's American Dream Fulfilled

Born and raised in Lebanon, Dib came to the U.S. in 1984 as a young man to attend college and pursue an education. He and his family settled in Brooklyn, where his extended family lives today.

Dib's "American" journey has been an impressive one. He worked hard to put himself through school. "My first job was pumping gas at the corner of Bowery and 3rd St. in NoHo, down the block from 37 Great Jones where I am building our latest project," said Dib.

While attending the New York Institute of Technology where he earned an Engineering degree, Dib waited tables at the Rockefeller Center restaurant. He later went on to earn an MBA from Columbia University, where he is a member of the University's Real Estate Circle of Leaders. In addition, he took business courses at Harvard Business School.

Mission to Help Others

After repeated visits to Latin Central America and Haiti 15 years ago, Dib was inspired to pursue a new dream. In 2003, he saw poor neighborhoods, people living in slums, hungry children aimlessly wandering the streets with little education and no future: scenes and images that brought immense sadness to his heart.

That year, he and his brother Dr. Joseph Dib co-founded the non-profit organization for children, Giving For Living International, (givingforliving.org). Today, the charity has distributed more than one million articles of shoes and clothing to over 1,000 children and families and set up lending libraries that distribute books for children. To help poor and often abused mothers, they also provide micro loans to women in countries like Guatemala, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic and Haiti to start their own small businesses - working with communities to improve their everyday lives. All of the organization's N.Y.-based staff members are volunteers, with almost 100% of money raised going to help the disadvantaged.

"There is so much need in Africa, Latin America, Haiti, other parts of the world, and also here at home," said Dib. "We should all help in whatever way we can and where ever we feel connected. Because of us, these kids have access to books and their mothers can begin new lives and support their families."

Alwaysmed.com

If that isn't enough to keep this executive busy, Dib is always thinking of how to solve problems. Together with his brother Dr. Joseph Dib, they founded a medical website in 2012 called Alwaysmed.com that allows secure and immediate access to electronic medical records on-line 24/7 on the web through a portable USB and on cell phones. "We designed it to help people better manage their personal medical records or those of their loved ones like teenagers away at college or elderly parents living alone or far away," said Dib.

The app is also great for real estate development companies with employees who can and do get sick or injured on the job. "This would help give immediate access for first responders in an emergency situation such as on a construction site," Dib said.

Both Dib and his brother, who is an emergency and internal medicine specialist for over 18 years, developed the idea while dealing with their own elderly dad's medical records a few years ago. "In medical emergencies electronic health records provide healthcare professionals with immediate access to vital medical information that can mean the difference between life and death," said Dib.

Looking ahead to the future, Dib hopes to expand Dib Development to include new projects in Miami, as well as, in and around the N.Y. metropolitan area. He also expects to grow Giving for Living International by spreading the word. "I want my friends, family, business associates and clients to get involved for the love of our fellow human beings and to help ease their suffering," said Dib. "That is one of my top priorities now."